

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 IO-13 EUR-25 DPW-01 AID-20 RSR-01

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4997

USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

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FOLLOWING MESSAGE SENT ACTION SAIGON INFO USDAO SAIGON, USSAG
NAKHON PHANOM FROM CAN THO JULY 23 BEING REPEATED FOR YOUR
INFO

QUOTE CAN THO 0596

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: MARR, MOPS, CA, HU, ID, PL, VS

SUBJECT: TRI TON ICCS MORTARED

SUMMARY: TWO MORTARS FELL JULY 23 INSIDE THE TRI TON ICCS
COMPOUND. NO ONE WAS INJURED. THE POLES, HUNGARIANS, AND
INDONESIANS HAVE ALL DECIDED TO LEAVE, THE CANADIANS HAVING
DEPARTED EARLIER AS PART OF THE PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED
CANADIAN WITHDRAWAL. AN ICCS HELICOPTER IS SCHEDULED
TO LIFT OUT THE TRI TON TEAM AT 1815 HOURS. END SUMMARY.

1. TWO MORTAR ROUNDS FELL INSIDE THE TRI TON ICCS COMPOUND
JULY 23 AT 1320 AND 1330. ONE LANDED ONLY TWO METERS FROM
THE RADIO ROOM, AND THE OTHER ABOUT THIRTY METERS AWAY.
NO ONE WAS INJURED AND ONLY THE COMPOUND ROOF SUFFERED
DAMAGES. FOLLOWING A LATE AFTERNOON MEETING AT REGION VII
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HEADQUARTERS IN CAN THO, THE POLISH AND HUNGARIAN DELEGATIONS

ANNOUNCED THEY WERE WITHDRAWING THEIR TEAMS FROM TRI TON. THE INDONESIANS HESITATED, AND THE CANADIANS, WHO HAD PULLED THEIR OWN TRI TON TEAM BACK TO CAN THO BEFORE THE MORTARING AS A PART OF THEIR SCHEDULED WITHDRAWAL FROM THE DELTA, ARUGED THAT THE INDONESIANS SHOULD STAY. THE INDONESIANS MET AMONG THEMSELVES AND THEN ANNOUNCED AT 1715 THAT THEY TOO WOULD WITHDRAW FROM TRI TON. THE ICCS TEAMS WILL BE EVACUATED BY HELICOPTER AT 1815 HOURS THIS EVENING.

2. JUST PRIOR TO HIS DECISION TO QUIT TRI TON, THE INDONESIAN REGION VII CHIEF, COL SANTOSA, TOLD A VICE CONSUL THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO LEAVE THE SITE. HE SAID THAT IF THE INDONESIANS WITHDREW, IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO SEND A TEAM BACK TO TRI TON. SANTOSA FEARED THAT DURING THE ICCS ABSENCE, THE VC/NVA WOULD FREELY COMMIT MANY CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS, ESPECIALLY INFILTRATIONS FROM CAMBODIA. SAIGON HAD DELEGATED THE DECISION TO HIM, SANTOSA SAID, AND IT WAS A PAINFUL ONE TO MAKE. AT THE SAME TIME HE HAD TO THINK OF THE SAFETY OF HIS TEAM. SANTOSA POINTED OUT THAT THE GVN COULD NOT GUARANTEE THE SAFETY OF THE ICCS IN TRI TON AND THAT THE ICCS COMPOUND THERE WAS INADEQUATELY FORTIFIED. HE SHOWED THE VICE CONSUL AN OLD REQUEST, NEVER ACTED UPON, FOR 10,000 ADDITIONAL SANDBAGS TO STRENGTHEN THE COMPOUND. (COMMENT: WE DOUBT THAT CONSIDERATION OF PERSONAL SAFETY DETERMINED THE INDONESIAN DECISION TO WITHDRAW. SANTOSA TOLD THE VICE CONSUL THAT HE WAS SORRY THAT THE CANADIANS HAD ALREADY DEPARTED THE SITE. HE LEFT THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT IF THE CANADIANS HAD REMAINED, HE WOULD REMAIN WITH THEM. SANTOSA DID NOT WANT THE INDONESIANS TO BE ALONE IN TRI TON. LEHMANN
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